

Clearly, the alleged species 1-5 are "related" to one another as per MPEP §806.04(b) and MPEP 806.05 *et seq.* Therefore, if the Examiner concludes they are distinct, the Examiner must show by appropriate explanation one of the following:

(A) Separate classification thereof: The Examiner must show that each distinct subject has attained recognition in the art as a separate subject for inventive effort and also requires a separate field of search.

(B) Separate status in the art if classified together: If each distinct subject is classified together, then the Examiner must show that each subject can be shown to have formed a separate subject for inventive effort. This may be shown by citing patents which are evidence of such separate status and also of a separate field of search.

(C) A different field of search: The Examiner may show that it is necessary to search for one distinct subject in places where no pertinent art to the other subject exists.

If the classification is the same and the field of search is the same and there is no clear indication of separate future classification and field of search, "no reasons exist for dividing among related inventions." MPEP §808.02.


In this application there are two primary concepts. The first concept is a stiffening member which is stiff and prevents the inflatable curtain from being twisted during assembly or transport. Alternative embodiments of this concept are shown in Figs 1 through 5. The second concept is a stiffening member which is not really stiff but rather deforms the inflatable curtain during twisting such that it can not be mounted without being rearranged. This is shown in Figs 6 and 7.

Applicants respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the concept disclosed in Figures 1-5 and consider that concept a single species for purposes of examination at this stage.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Appl. No. 10/663,139
Amdt. dated November 16, 2005
Reply to Office Action of October 25, 2005

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: 11/22/05

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